Case 2662

Aphonopelma Pocock, 1901 (Arachnida, Araneae): proposed precedence over *Rhechostica* Simon, 1892

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Abstract. The purpose of this application is the conservation of the generic name *Aphonopelma* Pocock, 1901, a widely used name of large American theraphosid spiders, whose species are commonly used as experimental animals and are also sold in pet stores. The name is threatened by an essentially unused senior subjective synonym, *Rhechostica* Simon, 1892.

1. In 1892 Simon proposed the genus *Rhechostica* (1892b, p. 162) with the type species by monotypy *Homoeomma texense* Simon, 1892 (1892a, p. 320).

2. Pocock (1901, p. 553) proposed the genus *Aphonopelma* with type species by original designation *Eurypelma seemanni* F. O. Pickard-Cambridge, 1897 (p. 26) from Costa Rica. Raven (1985, p. 149), who stated 'types examined', synonymized the genera *Aphonopelma* and *Rhechostica*. It is worth noting that Raven also placed six other nominal genera into subjective synonymy with *Rhechostica* in the same work; three of these (*Chaunopelma*, *Clavopelma*, and *Gosipelma*) date from Chamberlin, 1940; two (*Dugesiella* and *Pterinopelma*) from Pocock, 1901; and *Delopelma* from Petrunkevitch, 1939.

3. The name *Aphonopelma* is widely used in books on American spiders: Baerg (1958, pp. 43, 56, 57, 62 and others); Levi & Levi (1968, p. 21); Gertsch (1979, pp. 43, 233, 234 and 249); Kaston (1978, p. 67); and Roth (1986, unpaginated). Also, species assigned to the genus are used in experimental zoology. A computer search through journals published during the last 17 years revealed more than 40 papers using the name. Bonnet (1955, pp. 356–357) lists three species in the genus up to 1939, and Brignoli's Catalog (1983, p. 134) lists the names of 15 species of *Aphonopelma* described since 1939. The name *Aphonopelma* is also widely used in the pet trade and in books on pets (Schmidt, 1986, pp. 48, 49; Smith, 1986, pp. 44–49). The Secretariat holds a list of eight general books, eight additional uses in journals not found by the computer search, and four books on pets in which the name *Aphonopelma* is used.

4. *Rhechostica* has only been cited in Schmidt (1986, pp. 48, 51), the catalogs of Bonnet (1958, p. 3855) and Roewer (1942, p. 245), and is listed in Comstock (1940. pp. 240, 241). It has never been used in any primary zoological literature, and only Raven (1985, p. 149) has adopted it as a valid name.

5. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to give precedence to the name *Aphonopelma* Pocock, 1901 over the name *Rhechostica* Simon, 1892, whenever the two are considered to be synonyms;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the following names:
  - (a) *Aphonopelma* Pocock, 1901 (gender: neuter), type species by original designation *Eurypelma seemanni* F. O. Pickard-Cambridge, 1897, with the endorsement that it is to be given precedence over *Rhechostica* Simon, 1892 whenever the two names are considered to be synonyms;
  - (b) *Rhechostica* Simon, 1892 (gender: feminine), type species by monotypy *Homoeomma texense* Simon, 1892, with the endorsement that it is not to be given priority over *Aphonopelma* Pocock, 1901 whenever the two names are considered to be synonyms;
- (3) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the following names:
  - (a) *seemanni* F. O. Pickard-Cambridge, 1897, as published in the binomen *Eurypelma seemanni* (specific name of the type species of *Aphonopelma* Pocock, 1901):
  - (b) *texense* Simon, 1892, as published in the binomen *Homoeomma texense* (specific name of the type species of *Rhechostica* Simon, 1892).

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